Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) An auctioning system for facilitating bidder participation in an auction for the purchase of a lot, comprising:

at least a first data processing device and a memory in communication with the data processing device, the memory storing instructions executable by the processor to:

~~A method for auctioning a lot, comprising:~~

receive[[ing]] a plurality of messages from a plurality of bidders for the lot, each message including a bid for the lot;

send[[ing]] a bid acceptance message by SMS to each of said bidders notifying the bidder of the status of the bidder's bid;

charge[[ing]] each bidder for sending the bid acceptance message; and

determine[[ing]] a bidder associated with a [[the]] lowest unique bid for the lot, wherein, at a close of the auction, the lowest unique bid is a winning bid in the auction for the purchase of the lot.

2. (Currently amended) The auctioning system ~~method~~ of claim 1, wherein the plurality of messages are received via SMS messaging.

3. (Currently amended) The auctioning system ~~method~~ of claim 1, wherein the instructions are further executable to charge[[ing]] each bidder ~~includes~~ by sending the bid acceptance message by a reverse billed SMS message.

4. (Currently amended) The auctioning system ~~method~~ of claim 1, wherein the instructions are further executable to ~~and further comprising~~ limit[[ing]] each bidder up to a maximum number of bids per auction.

5. (Currently amended) The <u>auctioning system</u> ~~method~~ as claimed in claim 1, wherein the bid acceptance message notifies the bidder that either their bid is the current lowest unique bid, their bid is not unique or their bid is unique, but is not currently the lowest unique bid.

6. (Currently amended) The <u>auctioning system</u> ~~method~~ as claimed in claim 1 <u>wherein instructions are further executable to</u> ~~and further including~~:

send[[ing]] a notification message to a bidder when the status of the bidder's bid changes.

7. (Currently amended) The <u>auctioning system</u> ~~method~~ as claimed in claim 6, wherein the status of the bidder's bid changes to not currently being a unique bid and the notification message notifies the bidder that their bid is no longer unique and the price of the bidder's bid.

8. (Currently amended) The <u>auctioning system</u> ~~method~~ as claimed in claim 6, wherein the status of the bidder's bid changes to not currently being the lowest unique bid and the notification message notifies the bidder that their bid is no longer the lowest unique bid but is currently a unique bid.

9. (Currently amended) The <u>auctioning system</u> ~~method~~ as claimed in claim 1, wherein the received bidder messages are passed at least partially over the internet before processing the bid [[and/]]or the bid acceptance messages are passed at least partially over the internet before being sent by SMS.

10. (Currently amended) The <u>auctioning system</u> ~~method~~ as claimed in claim 1, wherein the <u>instructions are executable to handle</u> communication with the bidders ~~is handled~~ by software in real time.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently amended) The <u>auctioning system</u> ~~method~~ as claimed in claim [[11]] <u>26,</u> <u>wherein the instructions are further executable to</u>~~and further comprising~~:

receive[[ing]] an auction identifier data item with the bid data item, the auction identifier data item being derived from the same bid message sent by a bidder as the bid data item; and

use[[ing]] the auction identifier data item to determine an auction corresponding to the auction identifier data item.

13. (Currently amended) The auctioning system method as claimed in claim [[11]] 26, wherein the instructions are further executable to and further comprising:

validate[[ing]] the bid data item to determine whether the bid is an acceptable bid for the auction.

14. (Currently amended) The auctioning system method as claimed in claim [[11]] 26, wherein the instructions are further executable to and further comprising:

poll[[ing]] a message store to identify new messages;

use[[ing]] a mobile phone telephone number data item to determine whether the bid is associated with a live session for an auction and if it is then loading message data into a message object;

if the bid is not associated with a live session for the auction, then use[[ing]] an auction identifier data item to determine whether the bid is for an auction and if it is then load[[ing]] message data into a message object; and

pass[[ing]] the message object to an auction application.

15. (Currently amended) The auctioning system method of claim [[11]] 26, wherein the instructions are further executable to and further comprising:

check[[ing]] whether the bid data item is in the correct bid units; and

if not, then convert[[ing]] the bid data item into the correct bid units.

16. (Currently amended) The auctioning system method of claim [[11]] 26, wherein the instructions are further executable to and further comprising generate[[ing]] a unique identifier for each bid data item received.

17. (Currently amended) The auctioning system ~~method~~ of claim 13, wherein instructions executable to validunderline{ate}[[ing]] the bid data item includunderline{e}[[s]] at least one of the following ~~one~~ ~~operation selected from~~:

instructions executable to determine ~~determining~~ whether an auction is active;

instructions executable to determine ~~determining~~ whether the bid exceeds a maximum number of bids for the bidder; and

instructions executable to determine ~~determining~~ whether the bid data item falls within a range of acceptable bid values.

18. (Currently amended) The auctioning system ~~method~~ of claim [[11]] 26, wherein instructions executable to determinunderline{e}[[ing]] whether the bid data item is the current lowest unique bid for the auction further comprisunderline{e}[[s]] instructions executable to:

carrunderline{y}[[ing]] out a look up of a database of stored bid data items for the auction;

determinunderline{e}[[ing]] whether the number of stored bids at the bid data item value is zero;

if the number of stored bids at the bid data item value is zero then carrunderline{y}[[ing]] out a look up of the database of stored bid data items for the auction to determine the current lowest unique bid value; and

determinunderline{e}[[ing]] whether the bid data item value is less than the current lowest unique bid value.

19. (Currently amended) The auctioning system ~~method~~ as claimed in claim [[11]] 26, further comprising instructions executable to ~~wherein~~ marshallunderline{[[ing]]} the bid acceptance message, which comprise instructions executable to:

selectunderline{[[ing]]} a message template for the acceptance message;

lookunderline{[[ing]]} up stored variable data items; and

populateunderline{[[ing]]} the message template with the variable data items.

20. (Currently amended) The auctioning system ~~method~~ as claimed in claim [[11]] 26, wherein instructions executable to sendunderline{[[ing]]} the acceptance message includunderline{e}[[s]] instructions executable to loadunderline{[[ing]]} a message object with message data and bidder data.

21. (Currently amended) The <u>auctioning system</u> ~~method~~ of claim 20, wherein sending the acceptance message further includes placing the message object in a message queue table.

22. (Currently amended) The <u>auctioning system</u> ~~method~~ of claim 21, wherein sending the acceptance message further includes:

polling the message queue table to identify new messages;

passing new messages to an aggregator service for transmission as an SMS message to the bidder.

23. (Currently amended) The <u>auctioning system</u> ~~method~~ of claim 22, <u>wherein the instructions are further executable to</u> ~~and further including~~ receive<u></u>[[ing]] a receipt ID from the aggregator for the message passed to the aggregator and stor<u>e</u>[[ing]] the receipt ID when received.

24. (Currently amended) The <u>auctioning system</u> ~~method~~ as claimed in claim 23, <u>wherein the instructions are further executable to</u> ~~and further comprising~~ determine[[ing]] whether the receipt ID has been received and updat<u>e</u>[[ing]] a status associated with the sent message.

25. (Currently amended) The <u>auctioning system</u> ~~method~~ as claimed in claim 24, <u>wherein the instructions are further executable to</u> ~~and further comprising~~:

identify[[ing]] a group of lowest unique bids; and

determin<u>e</u>[[ing]] the lowest bid of [[for]] the group of lowest unique bids for which the bid acceptance message has been received.

26. (Currently amended) <u>An auctioning</u> ~~A computer~~ system for facilitating bidder participation in an auction <u>for the purchase of a lot</u>, comprising:

at least a first data processing device and a memory in communication with the data processing device, the memory storing instructions <u>executable by</u> ~~for configuring~~ the processor to:

receive a bid data item over a computer network to which the computer system is connected, the bid data item being derived from a bid message sent by a bidder;

determine whether the bid data item is the current lowest unique bid for an auction;

if it is determined that the bid data item is the current lowest unique bid, then to generate a bid acceptance message indicating that the bid is the current lowest unique bid, and if it is determined that the bid data item is not the current lowest unique bid, then to generate a bid acceptance message indicating that the bid is not the current lowest unique bid;

determine a destination telecommunications device phone number for the acceptance message; and

send the acceptance message, at least partially over the computer network, for transmission to the bidder at the destination telecommunications device by a reverse billed SMS message, wherein, at a close of the auction, a lowest unique bid is a winning bid in the auction for the purchase of the lot.

27. (Canceled)

28. (Canceled)

29. (New) The auctioning system as claimed in claim 1, wherein the instructions are further executable to:

determine that the auction of the lot has ended; and

send a notification message to the bidder whose bid is the lowest unique bid that the bidder has placed a winning bid.

30. (New) The auctioning system as claimed in claim 26, wherein the instructions are further executable to:

determine that the auction of the lot has ended; and

send a notification message to the bidder whose bid is the lowest unique bid that the bidder has placed a winning bid.